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INNOVATION . . . INFORMATION . . . INSPIRATION

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MASSACHUSETTS GOVERNOR CHARLIE BAKER AND PENNSYLVANIA CONGRESSMAN TIM MURPHY DISCUSS NEW FEDERAL MENTAL HEALTH REFORM LEGISLATION



Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker and Representative Tim Murphy (PA) met at the Massachusetts State House to discuss Rep. Murphy's federal legislation, [Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act](#) (HR 2646). Pictured here are (left to right) Rep. Murphy, Round Table President Philip Mangano, and Governor Baker in Governor Baker's office.

The bipartisan bill, which currently has 56 cosponsors, was reintroduced in June 2015 as a measure to refocus federal mental health programs, reform federal grants, and remove federal barriers to care. An

important part of the reintroduction of the bill is the variety of provisions addressing homelessness that are now included. Mangano has met several times in Washington with Congressman Murphy, Chief of Staff Susan Mosychuk, and Legislative Assistant Scott

Dziengelski to discuss the legislation and offer both ideas for improvement to benefit homeless people and assistance in seeking additional support from the field.

Importantly, the legislation requires the use of evidence-based practices in federal funding and creates a new Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The new Assistant Secretary will include the reduction of homelessness in its oversight and coordination of programs and prepare a regular report on the State of the States in mental health and substance abuse treatment including outcome measures on homelessness. The Baker Administration has recently announced the creation of a new Assistant Secretary of Behavioral Health position in the Executive Office of Health and Human Services to serve as point person for those issues.

Further, a federal report on outcome measures regarding the Assisted Outpatient Treatment model (AOT) will address the extent to which AOT helps those with serious mental illness gain control over their lives, including rates of homelessness. Caregiver access to information would be permitted under HIPAA expansion, and the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness would be a member of a new federal interagency Serious Mental Illness Coordinating Committee.

A new National Mental Health Policy Lab will report on the quality of care provided through federal grant programs, with outcomes including reduced rates of homelessness. States will report public health outcomes to the Lab including on homelessness and on county level data on rates of homelessness among the patient population.

State Plans for federal mental health block grants for integrating primary and behavioral health care shall include a specific description of case management services for activities leading to reductions in the rate of homelessness. Block grants can be used to expand the use of evidence-based models if the Assistant Secretary determines the change will reduce rates of homelessness. States receiving block grant funds must have active programs, including Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) to engage persons with serious mental illness, including targeting persons who are homeless. In addition, the bill advances mental health and substance abuse parity, requires more effective discharge planning and treatment access, incentivizes alternatives to institutionalization and the use of Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT), promotes early intervention and prevention, and supports primary and behavioral health care integration.

The bill comes at a time when Governor Baker, who was formerly Massachusetts Secretary of Health and Human Services under Governor William Weld, and Secretary of Administration and Finance under Weld and his successor Paul Cellucci, has revitalized the Commonwealth's cost-effective Special Initiative to House the Homeless Mentally Ill in the FY 2016 budget. The Special Initiative was established by Baker in 1991 in response to efforts by then Boston Mayor Ray Flynn and Round Table President Mangano (then Executive Director of the Greater Boston Shelter Alliance). The [history](#),

[housing resources](#), and [client outcomes](#) of the multi-year initiatives have been extensively researched to show its benefits.

Rep. Murphy, the Congress' only practicing psychologist is Co-chair of the Congressional Mental Health Caucus and drafted the bill after extensive research and oversight hearings. Rep. Murphy currently serves in the Navy Reserve Medical Service Corps at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center at Bethesda where he works as a Navy psychologist with service members with traumatic brain injury and post traumatic stress.

Among the national endorsers of the new legislation are NAMI, American Psychological Association, American Psychiatric Association, American College of Emergency Physicians, and the National Council for Behavioral Health.

BRIDGEPORT, CONNECTICUT PARTNERS GATHER TO ANNOUNCE RESULTS FROM TEN YEAR PLAN TO END CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS

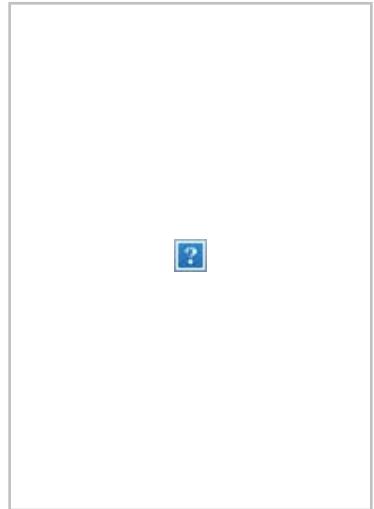


Ten years ago Bridgeport, CT joined the national partnership to end homelessness. Then Mayor John Fabrizi, United Way of Coastal Fairfield County President Merle Berke-Schlessel, Round Table President Mangano (then Executive Director of the U.S. Interagency Council on

Homelessness), and Interagency Council Regional Coordinator John O'Brien joined local partners and investors gathered at the Crescent Building supportive housing development in Bridgeport. "If we could end homelessness," the new Ten Year Plan for Greater Bridgeport, was launched on that late June day. Pictured here is the 2005 event.

In Bridgeport in late June 2015, ten years to the day, now Bridgeport Mayor Bill Finch, United Way's Ms. Berke-Schlessel, and community partners gathered again at the Crescent to mark their results in ending chronic and veteran homelessness and map the road ahead. Supportive Housing Works, which advances regional initiatives and creates and preserve supportive housing, helped organize the event. Mayor Finch is shown here.

"At the time, the Ten Year Plan was a deviation from how we conducted



business on the homeless front as it looked to engage other sectors of the community traditionally not involved in homelessness and charged elected officials to be champions of the cause," according to a statement from the United Way. Giving credit to then U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness Executive Director Philip Mangano for the "moral imperative" he delivered, the United Way statement noted: "His presence . . . conveyed an optimism that we were about to embark on a collective journey; and even back then he spoke of using evidence-based data driven interventions as 'we don't need more programs for serving homelessness but we need programs that show results in e-n-d-i-n-g homelessness.' "

Data also was the deciding factor resulting in the merger of the Continuum of Care systems in Bridgeport, Norwalk, and Stamford. Research demonstrated that individuals were moving up and down the I95 Corridor to access services and other resources. The result was the I95 Alliance and a new merged entity known as Opening Doors Fairfield County. Evidence based practices and scaling are at work in housing and services for the regional alliance.

And the results are in. As of 2015, there has been 28% reduction in overall Veteran homelessness, a 37% decrease in the total number of people homeless, a 65% decrease in family homelessness, and a 52% decrease in chronic homelessness.



Round Table President Mangano, present at the 2005 launch and invited to speak at the 2015 press event, sent his congratulations to those assembled. Following are excerpts from his [remarks](#). Ms. Berke-Schlessel is shown here reading Mangano's remarks at the event.

"I wish that I could be with you there today at the Crescent Apartments, just as I was on June 27, 2005 for the

launch of the plan and have so often been over more than a decade, to congratulate you all on the conversion of your Ten Year Plan - '**If** we could end homelessness' - to the reality of '**We are** ending homelessness.'

"Starting with former Mayor Fabrizi and the deepening of the commitment by Mayor Finch, the political will and partnership with state leaders including Governor Malloy and former Senator John McKinney, with business and civic leaders, and consumers, has been exemplary. Steady leadership has come from Plan Co-chair Merle Berke-Schlessel of the United Way. I remember talking with her on the day of the launch - her cautious optimism made sense for such an ambitious undertaking!

"Combined with your record and experience, your vision for challenging the status quo in your community - whether by establishing the Bridgeport Housing First Alliance and creating a solid partnership with your Housing Authority or launching the I95 Alliance

to expand your effectiveness - provides you the tools and the team to scale the solution of housing for the future.

"As I said a decade ago, there are many more Bridgeports in our country than New Yorks or Chicagos. Your success resonates through cities your size across our nation. Your resolve to abolish homelessness assures your place in a national partnership that will overcome the doubts of the pessimists."

 "One important variable in making anything of this significance happen is investment," stated United Way. "United Way sought out a partner who had the vision to see that ending homelessness in 10 years could become a reality. That visionary investor is Citizens Bank Foundation, and over the ten years of this plan, they provided not only the seed funding for the plan but over half a million dollars."

According to United Way, the investment which leveraged approximately \$61 million in related funding from various state and federal grants. Pictured here is the 2005 event with a \$50,000 check being presented to United Way President Berke-Schlessel by Ruth Price, then of RBS (now Citizens).

REMEMBERING MITCH SNYDER: THE 2003 MITCH SNYDER LECTURE AND AWARD

 On February 9, 2003, then U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness Executive Director Philip Mangano presented the Mitch Snyder Lecture at First Church, Cambridge in Massachusetts and was presented with the Mitch Snyder Award.

Mangano's 2003 remarks came at the beginning of the wave of communities that committed to Ten Year Plans to End Homelessness in the new national

partnership. There were perhaps 10-15 such plans underway in the country at that time. Eventually that number grew to 350 plans reflecting the partnership of more than 1,000 city and county officials across the country.

First Church has provided night shelter and services under the leadership of Jim Stewart since 1987 and sponsors an annual lecture and award to focus on Snyder's "singular commitment to the poor and homeless."

Following on the Round Table's publication in the last enews of "A

[personal note on a national hero](#)", following are excerpts from the 2003 Mitch Snyder Lecture by Round Table President Mangano. Read the remarks in their entirety [here](#).

"To be here today to deliver the Mitch Snyder Lecture is an honor . . . I met Mitch only a few times . . . When I heard that he had gone, I stopped. The anger came with the tears. He was, after all, our field general. While we were skirmishing, he was on the front battle lines. He kept the flame burning in our nation's Capitol and in hearts around the country. And he kept the issue visible.

"He was a practitioner of moral agitation. I dare say he saw homelessness for all of what it was - political, economic sociological, spiritual, ideological. But most assuredly he saw at its heart a moral dimension. Something was wrong in our country in all the other dimensions and they resolved into moral wrong.

"And like his predecessors, whether Amos coming down from the hills or John the Baptist preaching out in the desert, he had a word for our society, our culture. Not an easy word. A hard one, urging moral transformation. A voice that not everyone loved to hear.

"They didn't like Amos' or John's either. Or William Lloyd Garrison's, the great abolitionist orator and editor, or Susan B. Anthony's, the relentless suffragette or Sakharov's, the Soviet dissident, or Mandela's, the political prisoner, or Martin's or Malcolm's, the civil rights crusaders . . .

"Whenever the prophetic witness has been summoned, given, created - however it comes - those names are added to the litany. Known and unknown here, they are recorded where moth and rust will never dull their legacy.

"I was in Church recently. A place I don't get often enough. And as the service was winding down and I was thinking of my plans for the afternoon, I was mouthing the words to a hymn with mind far away, when the opening words of the fourth stanza brought me back to the present.

"The verse began: 'Save us, Lord, from weak resignation to the evils we abhor.'

" 'Save us, Lord, from weak resignation to the evils we abhor.'

"The art of prophetic witness begins there. No resignation to evil. Which means that you have to be able to name evil.

"Which is no easy thing these days . .

"I sense that prophetic witness follows that long 'moral arc of the universe' that Martin Luther King, Jr. spoke of, which 'bends toward justice.'

"The prophetic witness is, then, not only present to what is, but also to what is to come in the future. These witnesses appropriate the common sense of the future to overcome the socially accommodated wrongs of the present.

"In that vision, the prophetic witness sees the future justice and longs for its present fulfillment. 'How long, O Lord,' they cry. Because they see the justice of that arc bending, but not touching. And they ache for that touch.

"There is an urgency fueled by having that future vision present with them now. Desiring its manifestation now. Not postponing the gratification of justice.

"For them the common sense of the future is available in the present. And they can't, for the life of them, understand why everyone doesn't see it.

"But not everyone does. In fact most don't initially. Such witness invariably creates tension. The future's common sense - that you should not own another person - that the right to suffrage is not gender specific - that a government has no right to totalitarian control over its citizens - that skin pigmentation is not the basis of political control - that race is not a factor in civil rights - that these now accepted axioms of common sense were in another day sources of great debate and contention.

"And, in fact, those witnesses who brought the future to those times were ridiculed and labeled. Their confrontations with social norms and encouragement of conflict were resisted by the practitioners of the 'way things are.'

"The prophetic witnesses are condemned as wrong and dismissed as naive. Their ideas rejected as folly.

"As witnesses of what is and what will be, they are not particularly liked - by either foe or ally. They shove the foe and push the ally.

"They are equally threatening to propagators of the status quo and propagandists of the apocalypse. What 'is' needs much change. It is unworthy of the justice to come. The status quo will go.

"What 'will be' can be equally threatening to ideological solemnists, left and right. That long arc goes not to slave ships or gulags, nor to survivalist bunkers or courtroom vagaries. The good Dr. tells us that the trajectory is justice.

"And so what does this all mean for our prophetic witness regarding the contemporary social wrong of homelessness? What's the future we're appropriating? And how do we get there?

"The prophetic witness of the future, following the arc bending to justice is simple: A home for every American. That's the vision of justice.

"That will be the common sense of the future. Less than that does not make sense . . .

"How can our witness prepare the way - 'make straight the way?' We can begin by appropriating that prophetic witness of the future and fashioning a new standard of expectation. A new standard of

expectation of what some would call naive. The expectation to move beyond the current way things are to the way things ought to be.

"Moving away from the status quo of managing the problem, maintaining the efforts, accommodating the wrong. Toward a new standard of expectation that requires visible, measurable, quantifiable change on the sidewalks of our streets, in the shadows of our shelters, and, most importantly, in the lives of our homeless neighbors.

"Moving away from ad hoc responses that shuffle our poorest neighbors from one city to another, from one side of town to another, from one homeless program to another . . .

"Our grandchildren will look back on us and wonder what we were thinking. Just as we look back on our ancestors and recognize that their accommodation of slavery, discrimination based on color, state totalitarianism, and gender suffrage are the social norms of yesterday, not the common sense of today.

"And someday soon our children and grandchildren will look back on our social accommodations. And they'll wonder how we resigned ourselves to so many of our neighbors not having a place to live. They will recognize this disgrace for what it is, and place it alongside its closest kin - all those social wrongs we so abhor.

"And so we pray, 'Save us, Lord, from weak resignation to the evils we abhor.' And 'deliver us to the naivete and folly' of believing that we can appropriate the prophetic witness of our future, today. A witness rooted in that moral arc that bends toward justice . . .

"These voices have been around for a long, long time.
They spoke such words to Harriet Tubman and
Frederick Douglass and William Lloyd Garrison.
And Elizabeth Katy Stanton and Susan B. Anthony.
To Martin Luther King, Jr.
To Sakharov and Solzhenitsyn.
To Mandela and Tutu.
'You can't change things,' they say.
'Don't be naive and foolish.'

"These same voices speak to us as we address the social wrong and disgrace of homelessness. These are the voices of the past looking backward to the legacy of injustice. As you know, they were wrong then. And they're wrong now. The voice of the prophetic witnesses looks forward to the arc of justice . . .

"Well, there are many who have shared a dream. A dream that someday soon no American will need to be on the streets. That no American family will need to be in a shelter. That no American veteran will be homeless. An abolitionist dream. A waking reality.

"We don't know exactly how it will come. How we will get there. But we can bear witness to that future reality.

"And here today - in honoring the memory of Mitch Snyder - the faith

and vision and courage to realize such a dream are being celebrated. And well they should. Their endurance will make that dream a reality for every woman, child, and man in your city, our country.

"The stakes are high. Lives are in the balance. Our partnerships must embrace every citizen. Stopping for all. Ensuring that none are left behind.

"And that everyone will be known by a single name - neighbor - and be treated as one.

"Today we can leave the voices of the 'way things are' behind us. To appropriate the common sense of the future to overcome the social wrongs of the present.

"Today we can leave the voices of the "weak resignation" behind us. The prophetic witnesses call us to appropriate the common sense of the future to overcome the social wrongs of the present. Courage calls us to be modern day abolitionists and Samaritans, seeking the one goal, the one mission, the one vision that unites us - A Home for Every American."

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